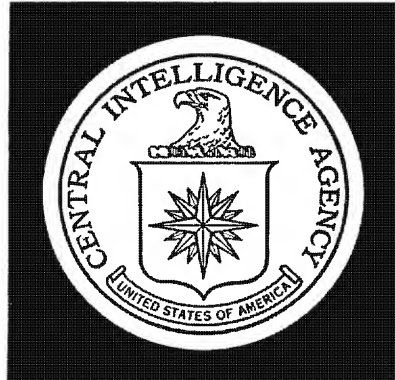


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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Report

Questions and Answers Relating to Vietnam

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8 December 1967

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS RELATING TO VIETNAM

8 December 1967

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2. Is there evidence that the North Vietnamese are limited by manpower from sending additional troops to the south?

The weight of the evidence indicates that North Vietnam is not limited by manpower considerations (in terms of available bodies) from sending additional troops into South Vietnam. Of a population of about 18.5 million, about 2 million males between the ages of 15 and 49 are physically fit for military service. So far, only about a fourth of the physically fit males are in the armed services. The bombing program has resulted in the diversion of about 500,000 civilian men and women of all ages into war-related activities--about 5 percent of the total labor force.

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2. How large a force in South Vietnam, of both Viet Cong and North Vietnamese, can North Vietnam support--given its potential, our bombing, and other pertinent factors?

Although we do not know with certainty what the present VC recruitment rate is, we believe the VC are recruiting the maximum number of replacements possible under present circumstances. We estimate that North Vietnam has infiltrated personnel at an average monthly rate of about 6,000 (72,000 annual rate) over the last year or so. North Vietnam has the capability to train 75,000-100,000 men a year for infiltration. By shortening current training cycles or increasing the number of units involved in the training of new recruits, this number could be substantially increased, although quality would be reduced. We estimate that North Vietnam could probably double its present infiltration rate for a year or so without seriously weakening its forces in North Vietnam. We also believe the present logistical system could support the increased infiltration and expanded force structure in the South with some augmentation of personnel and transport equipment. It would thus appear that, from purely a manpower standpoint, the Vietnamese Communists could, at least over the short term, substantially increase the strength of their main forces in South Vietnam.

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3. *How much of the Viet Cong main force strength is now composed of North Vietnamese?*

The regular forces (VC main and local forces and North Vietnamese Army troops) in South Vietnam number about 118,000. Of these, about 54,000 are in NVA units and about 64,000 are in VC main and local force units. However, there are at least 10,000 other North Vietnamese, and perhaps more, serving in historic VC units. Some VC units in the northernmost provinces were also originally formed almost entirely of northern draftees who never served in the regular North Vietnamese Army except for basic training.

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4. *How much of Viet Cong guerrilla strength is now composed of North Vietnamese troops?*

There is no evidence that North Vietnamese troops are being used to reinforce Viet Cong village and hamlet guerrillas. Some northerners may possibly be serving in some village organizations as military or political advisers, and some guerrilla units may contain former Viet Minh regrouped to the North and reinfilitrated. We are, however, beginning to see more and more evidence that North Vietnamese are going into some Viet Cong local force units, at least in I and II Corps. These units are the lowest elements on the enemy's regular forces ladder and are formed of full-time personnel who usually serve in their own province or district areas.

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5. *Is the bombing reducing the infiltration of men? By what degree? What is the evidence to support this?*

Based on an analysis of interrogation reports and captured documents, we estimate that air attacks killed not more than 2 percent of the North Vietnamese Army troops infiltrating into South Vietnam during 1966.. Indirectly, however, the bombing contributes to an increase in the number of desertions among infiltrators and to the number of men who die from sickness en route to South Vietnam. Losses from the latter causes may run as high as 20 percent in some infiltrating groups.

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6. *Is the bombing reducing the infiltration of materiel? By what degree? What is the evidence to support this?*

The bombing has not reduced the infiltration of materiel. Truck traffic from North Vietnam into the Laotian Panhandle has increased each year, making available a greater volume of supplies for use in Laos and South Vietnam. Extension of the road network in Laos during the past three years now permits truck traffic to move all the way from North Vietnam into South Vietnam throughout the year. If the interdiction program had not been undertaken, however, even larger volumes of supplies probably would have been infiltrated to South Vietnam.

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7. *Is there evidence that the bombing has weakened the will of the leaders of Hanoi?*

There is no evidence of this, but it is unlikely we would obtain such evidence. US intervention certainly must have sobered many North Vietnamese cadre who, in 1964, were banking on an early and relatively inexpensive victory in the South. It probably is a safe assumption that the shattering of these hopes and the destruction in the North have created doubts in the minds of some of the leaders in Hanoi. There is some evidence of such doubt at lower levels and among the population as a whole, but we see nothing to suggest this has or is likely to persuade the leadership that its strategy is incorrect.

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8. *Is there evidence that the bombing has strengthened the will of the leaders of Hanoi?*

Again, there is no evidence of this. There are many observers, however, including some in Hanoi, who are convinced that the bombings have inflamed nationalist sentiment and have thus strengthened the will to resist. This argument is bolstered by our assumption that the successful North Vietnamese effort to overcome the effects of the bombings has increased the confidence of the regime that it can cope with the awesome power of the US. We are inclined to take at face value Hanoi's assertions that it considers the bombings an inconclusive factor in determining the outcome of the war.

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9. *What is the order of battle of ground forces in North Vietnam?*

It is estimated that the North Vietnamese Army now numbers approximately 443,000 men. In-country forces number approximately 374,000 men broken down into 10 infantry divisions, an artillery division, an antiaircraft artillery division, two infantry brigades, slightly over 100 independent antiaircraft artillery regiments, some 30 to 35 SAM battalions and other service and support units. Out-of-country forces include at least 54,000 personnel in South Vietnam and 18,000 in Laos.

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10. *How are those forces being utilized in North Vietnam today--how many repair lines of communication, how many man air defenses and coastal defenses, how many are in training capacities?*

The bulk of North Vietnam's Army--aside from those involved in full-time air defense and antiaircraft artillery roles (some 93,000 personnel)--is engaged in activities common to any army. At least seven of the 12 or so major infantry units, roughly 80,000 troops out of a total of about 171,000 infantry troops, are believed to have a training role; that is, training new recruits and forming new units for infiltration to South Vietnam or to replace regular units that are sent south. An estimated 111,000 personnel are believed to be engaged in such other activities as armor, artillery, logistics, engineers, transportation and high command or administrative tasks. A portion of most army units--the exact extent unknown--is probably engaged in bomb repair and related tasks.

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11. *How dependent is the NLF on infiltration of men and supplies from the North? What evidence is there that the NLF is controlled by North Vietnam?*

The steady flow of personnel infiltration in 1967 is the best evidence of the necessary contribution Hanoi is making to keep the Communists' main forces intact. North Vietnamese troops are being used as fillers in many Viet Cong regular units, primarily because of Viet Cong recruitment difficulties in South Vietnam. Enemy main force units are now almost fully equipped with the Soviet family of small arms weapons, for which ammunition can only come from the Communist countries through North Vietnamese hands. The same is true of such heavier weapons as artillery, rockets and large caliber mortars.

NVA and VC regular and administrative support forces in South Vietnam currently require about 55 tons of supplies per day--about 25 percent of their supply requirements--from external sources. External sources provide about 22 percent of the food supply requirement, 30 percent of their weapons and equipment supply requirement, and 85 percent of the ammunition supply requirement.

Documents, prisoners, and a body of other evidence provide substantial proof that the VC--and the NLF, its political facade--are controlled by North Vietnam through the Communist party, even though NLF leaders are southerners and include some non-Communists.

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12. *How is the NLF organized? What is its strength? Is it predominantly South Vietnamese? Is there any evidence that the NLF is controlled by Peking?*

The NLF is organized according to the typical Communist pyramidal structure. In theory, the top body is an elected Congress, but real power rests in the Central Committee Presidium with a Secretariat. This body, which is studded with members of the Communist Party, directs the activities of Front committees extending down through the Province, District, Village and Hamlet levels. In addition to this structure, the Front also has allied with it numerous organizations such as women, youth, student groups and so forth. At all levels of the Front, representatives of the Peoples' Revolutionary (Communist) Party (PRP) enjoy key positions and can exercise effective control over Front activities.

The PRP, in turn, takes its direction from the North Vietnamese Party. Current estimates indicate that there are approximately 750,000 men and women enrolled in one or another Front organization. Probably over 80 percent of these are residing in Viet Cong - controlled areas and are almost wholly South Vietnamese.

There is no evidence that the Front is controlled by Peking.

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13. *How much popular support does the NLF enjoy from nonmembers in South Vietnam?*

One of the primary failures of the NLF has been its inability to bring to its banner any politically significant individual or group in South Vietnam. In the past it called on antigovernment elements, such as the Buddhists, to join with it but has received little response. Recently, however, the Front has begun an intensive campaign based on its new program to portray itself as a viable alternative to the Saigon government. There is no sign that the new approach has expanded popular support for the Front so far, but the Communists apparently intend to push in this direction, probably in the belief that any eventual political settlement may develop in the form of an agreement on a Communist-dominated coalition in South Vietnam.

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14. *How many civilians have been killed or wounded in (1) South Vietnam and (2) North Vietnam from all causes?*

(1) The number of civilian dead and wounded as a result of the war in South Vietnam is extremely difficult to estimate because of imprecise records and shifting reporting criteria. Available data from 1958 through November 1967 indicates that approximately 14,800 civilians were killed as a result of Communist terrorism alone; the estimated number of civilians wounded in terrorist attacks is even less firm, but is most probably around 25,000-30,000. Since July 1965, close to 6,500 have been killed, including almost 1,500 civil officials. In 1967, civilian casualties of Communist terror number 3,166 killed and 6,587 wounded through 25 November.

(2) In North Vietnam, the estimated number of civilian casualties from 1965 through mid-1967 is 43,000 killed and wounded. Thirty to 40 percent of the total are estimated to have been killed. A large share of the civilian casualties were undoubtedly sustained by civilians engaged in war-related activities such as repair of bomb damage, civil defense, and logistics activities.

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15. *How do you explain the motivation of the Viet Cong?*

The key to the motivation of the Viet Cong movement is its hard-core leadership, or cadre structure. The unusually strong motivation of the cadres themselves contains varying degrees of Communism and nationalism, but is primarily rooted in the revolutionary tradition in Vietnam and is sustained by memories of the triumph secured at the end of the earlier Indochina conflict. Some of these same factors, of course, influence the rank and file Viet Cong, but their continuing support of the VC depends primarily upon more limited and personal considerations such as antagonism over GVN actions against them or their families. Such feelings are exploited by the hard-core cadres.

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16. *How do you explain the motivation of the North Vietnamese?*

Hanoi's motives are a complex mixture of nationalism, anti-Americanism, Communist militancy, and historical experience. None of these is necessarily predominant and at various times one factor may carry more weight than others. At present, their experience with the French plays a role in explaining the leadership's persistence in the military struggle and their suspicions of negotiations. As for the rank and file North Vietnamese soldiers in the South, most studies indicate that the regime has been successful in indoctrinating them with a militant nationalism and anti-Americanism.

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17. *What percentage of the material being infiltrated into South Vietnam comes via Sihanoukville rather than via the Ho Chi Minh trail or across the DMZ?*

There is no reliable intelligence indicating that arms or supplies are delivered to any Cambodian ports for shipment to Communist forces in South Vietnam, or that the Cambodian Army is making any systematic diversion of arms to those forces. Some Cambodian arms probably reach Communist forces through small-scale, illegal transactions, however. Probably less than one-fifth of the total rice requirements of VC/NVA forces in South Vietnam comes from Cambodia and nearly all of the remainder is obtained within South Vietnam. Other items such as batteries, cloth, and paper produced or imported by Cambodia supplement the larger Viet Cong procurement of these supplies within South Vietnam.

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18. Please describe the escalation in the type of equipment infiltrated over the past 12 months as compared to prior times -- has there not been a step-up of rockets, artillery and other larger pieces?

Over a year ago 120-mm. mortars and 70-mm. and 75-mm. howitzers began to be used in South Vietnam. Other weapons that have been employed since early 1967 include Chinese Communist 102-mm. rockets, Soviet 122-mm. and 140-mm. rockets, and RPG-7 antitank grenade launchers. Rockets have been employed in I, II, and III Corps, and VC/NVA forces have made extensive use of mortars in all Corps areas, particularly 81/82-mm. mortars in II and III Corps. The firing of conventional artillery has only been confirmed in the DMZ area. The enemy employed 85-mm., 100-mm., 105-mm., 130-mm., and possibly 152-mm. artillery in attacks on Gio Linh, Con Thien, Camp Carroll, and Dong Ha.

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19. *How many Soviet military advisers are there in North Vietnam and what are they doing?*

We believe there are about 2,000 Soviet military technicians in North Vietnam at present. Since mid-1965, Soviet military technicians have had an essentially advisory role. In addition to working with the SAM system and jet fighter units, Soviet technicians have been engaged in communications, maintenance, and logistic support activities. Soviet technicians in North Vietnam have provided much of the transitional training on advance MIG-21 jet fighters.

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20. *How many Chinese military personnel are there in North Vietnam and what are they doing?*

An estimated 30,000 to 50,000 Chinese troops are working on the construction, repair, and defense of transportation facilities in North Vietnam, especially on the important Hanoi - Lao Cai and Hanoi - Dong Dang railroad lines. These forces include an estimated four antiaircraft artillery divisions, a railway engineer division, and four special engineer divisions. By maintaining the rail connections to China, Chinese support troops have facilitated the movement of both Chinese and Soviet war material and have released North Vietnamese manpower for keeping open the supply and infiltration routes to South Vietnam and Laos. Some Chinese military personnel also are employed in the training of North Vietnamese troops.

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21. *Please assess the degree of damage to civilian structures and neighborhoods in North Vietnam attributable to our bombing?*

Damage by accidental bombing to residential housing has been relatively light in view of the large number of sorties flown. We estimate on the basis of aerial photography that only 2 percent of civilian structures in the urban area of Hanoi has been damaged or destroyed through October 1967. In Haiphong during the same period, about 10 percent of the total residential area in the urban complex has been damaged or destroyed. Heavier damage has been suffered in some outlying areas. In the small town of Phu Ly (population 5,000) about 80 percent of the residential area had been destroyed or damaged by mid-1967. Where significant damage to residential areas has occurred, military or economic targets have been nearby. In some cases air defense installations are located in residential areas.

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22. *To what degree is Cambodia being used as a sanctuary and a base of operations aside from its use as an infiltration trail?*

Some of the VC/NVA forces in South Vietnam operate along the Cambodian-South Vietnamese border, taking advantage of the remote, thinly populated areas and the venality of local Cambodian officials to establish facilities such as hospitals and supply caches. Enemy prisoners and defectors report the location within Cambodia of stations providing transients with food, shelter, and medical treatment. VC/NVA forces also frequently seek sanctuary in Cambodia when pressed by allied operations.

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23. *How often does the average VC/NVA maneuver unit fight? How is it measured? Is the low combat rate a matter of choice or necessity -- what is the limiting factor? Has the rate changed over the last year?*

In 1966, it was estimated that the average enemy battalion engaged in combat once every 35 days; during 1967 enemy engagements have increased -- currently the level of combat is estimated to be 1 in 30 days. In 1966 VC/NVA forces initiated 44 battalion-size attacks; through September of this year, despite a step-up in allied ground operations, and a small reduction in enemy forces, VC/NVA battalion-size attacks have numbered 36. The number of small-scale VC initiated attacks have increased from 540 during the last 6 months of 1966 to 978 during the first six months of 1967. This increase in small-scale attacks may reflect an inability on the part of the Communist logistical system within South Vietnam to expand its support of battalion-size combat operations or it may simply reflect a basic change in VC strategy -- a step-up in small-scale operations which, in some instances, are difficult for friendly forces to cope with and also tend to cut chances for inflicting crippling losses on the enemy.

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24. *How much of South Vietnam is "pacified" today. How do you measure what is "pacified" and what is not?*

Pacification is generally measured by the extent of security given to the population. The land area under government control contains the bulk of the population. The new Hamlet Evaluation System places about 67 percent of the population in areas offered varying degrees of protection by allied military forces and technically administered on a continuing basis by the GVN. About 16 percent of the population lives in contested areas, and about 17 percent under Viet Cong control. This is a marked improvement over the situation three years ago when about 40 percent of the population lived under government control; however, only slight gains have been made this year. Moreover, much of the population gain under the government wing consists of refugees. The roughly 11,378,000 persons constituting the 67 percent figure include about 3.5 million in urban areas. The GVN rates about 4,700 of the country's 12,000 hamlets as "secure."

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25. *What evidence do we have to indicate that a pacified area will stay pacified? Does the enemy have the resources to reverse pacification procedure? Has he done so? In what areas of the country? To what degree?*

Security remains the primary factor for maintaining the status of a pacified area, although in the strict sense it also requires a reasonably effective and responsive government administration. An area is likely to remain pacified if the enemy's main and local forces are prevented from encroaching on the area, if the Communist infrastructure is rooted out, if guerrilla forces cannot operate nearby, and if the government of Vietnam is capable of providing reasonably effective local government.

The Viet Cong still have the potential to reverse pacification gains in most areas of the country, either through force or through political subversion. The enemy has done so, at least to some extent. It has happened in I Corps because of the presence of large main force elements. Similar reverses have been accomplished in parts of Phu Yen Province and elsewhere on the central coast and in a number of delta provinces, such as Vinh Binh, by enemy small unit actions against the pacification areas, in combination with large unit threats, elsewhere to draw off the protective forces.

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26. *Is it necessary to win the allegiance of the pacified population or is it enough merely to bring them under government control? How do we know what their allegiance is?*

In the strict sense of prosecuting the war, it is probably not essential to win the "hearts and minds" of the population, provided that sufficient security can be maintained to deny the enemy access to them and to obtain the necessary amount of popular resources for the government side. It appears that an increasing number of persons are looking to the government for protection although this cannot be equated with positive support. In the longer term, some form of active commitment by the population to the government side is necessary to create a viable non-Communist regime in the South. Allegiance is measurable to some extent by the amount of voluntary participation in government programs, willingness to volunteer in the armed forces, to run for or serve in public office and administration, and to look to the government for the satisfaction of economic and social needs.

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27. *Is there any evidence that the enemy is moving back toward a guerrilla operation? If the enemy does this, can he sustain this effort indefinitely? Could this keep South Vietnam in turmoil? Could the South Vietnamese handle a protracted guerrilla war themselves?*

There is no evidence that the enemy is moving back toward a guerrilla operation in the sense that he is disbanding his main force structure and operations. There is evidence that the Communists are giving increased emphasis to guerrilla forces and tactics, and some regular units operate more often in dispersed, small unit actions.

If the enemy were to resort only to guerrilla warfare, he could sustain this effort for some time, provided he could remain supplied. He could probably reduce his loss rate, but, with roughly the present number of allied forces, his guerrilla force could probably be gradually reduced. Despite improvements, South Vietnam's ability to handle a protracted guerrilla situation, given anything like the present size enemy force, is questionable, and continued internal turmoil would seem inevitable.

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28. *How much materiel support comes into North Vietnam from the Soviet Union? From Red China? What kind of support comes from each?*

The USSR and Communist China have expanded military aid to North Vietnam from an estimated \$270 million in 1965--almost double that of the previous 11-year period--to an estimated \$455 million in 1966 and \$330 million in the first half of 1967. The USSR supplied about four-fifths of total military aid for these two and a half years and Communist China provided the remainder. Virtually all Soviet military deliveries have been for North Vietnam's air defense system including surface-to-air missiles, antiaircraft guns, radar, and fighter aircraft. Chinese military deliveries primarily have been to build up North Vietnamese ground forces and have included small arms and miscellaneous ground forces equipment.

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29. *What would happen to the North Vietnamese/Viet Cong movement if Ho Chi Minh died or otherwise left the scene? Who would take his place?*

We do not foresee any major change of policy because of Ho Chi Minh's death. To a great extent the North Vietnamese leadership has operated as a "collective," more so than most Communist parties. Of course, personal rivalries could come to the surface and affect policy, once Ho's personal authority in settling disputes is removed.

His most likely successors are Le Duan, now the party first secretary, or Pham Van Dong, the premier. The former is closely associated with the Viet Cong movement, and the latter has been most recently the authoritative spokesmen on matters relating to negotiations. Ho holds both the top party and the top government posts; these positions will probably be divided after his demise, possibly between these two men. In the short run, if the leadership continues its "collective" character, which men succeed Ho officially may not be too significant.

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30. *Is there any division within North Vietnamese/Viet Cong leadership on the conduct of the war or on the matter of negotiation which could cause a disruptive split beneficial to us?*

It is only prudent to allow for divisions within the Vietnamese Communist movement; it would, indeed, be surprising if there were none. But there is no persuasive evidence that any such differences in the leadership are over basic policy. Therefore a serious split cannot be predicted.

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31. *What is the role of the Nationalist Chinese in our Vietnamese activities?*

The Nationalist Chinese are providing small-scale assistance to the South Vietnamese military for psychological warfare training, as well as assistance to agriculture, health, and education. There are 26 Chinese in psychological warfare teams, and on the civil side, an 80-man agricultural team, a 16-man surgical team, and a 38-man electric power mission. In addition, the Chinese Nationalists have furnished 26 aluminum prefabricated warehouses, agricultural tools, seeds, and fertilizer, some 500,000 textbooks, and an electric power substation.

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32. *If the Chinese entered the war overtly, what would happen to Soviet material support for the Vietnamese Communists?*

We can't be very positive with this one. If this became a Chinese war, the Soviets would be faced with a whole new situation and would be forced to do some thorough soul-searching. Should they elect to continue supporting the Communist effort in Vietnam, we are inclined to believe the Chinese would continue to cooperate in permitting Soviet aid to flow through China for the VC/NVA.

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33. *Are captured enemy documents we now use to show his declining position valid or created "documents" intended to mislead us?*

Captured documents continue to provide a valuable source of raw information, and, in many instances, have been the basis for US intelligence assessments of the declining VC/NVA position. At present there is no indication that the Viet Cong have attempted to create, falsify, or plant documents on a scale large enough significantly to mislead US intelligence, although in isolated instances manufactured documents have been detected. Misinformation in captured documents is not uncommon. This is, however, usually the result of ignorance and is not falsification designed to mislead allied units into whose hands the documents might fall.

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34. *Is Viet Cong recruitment more difficult today than it was a year ago? How many South Vietnamese are recruited by the VC each month now? How many a year ago? What does this mean?*

There is increasing evidence -- from captured documents and interrogation reports -- that the VC are experiencing greater difficulties in recruiting. Recruitment has declined sharply in a number of provinces where government control has increased. Recruitment standards have been lowered for guerrillas, and there is competition among the various elements for recruits. The average monthly recruitment a year ago may have been on the order of 7,000-8,000 men and it may be 2,000-3,000 less today.

In the face of his recruiting difficulties, the enemy is finding it more difficult to fully replace his losses from in-country manpower. He is thus having to rely more on North Vietnamese infiltrates for his main force units in the three northern corps zones. So far, the pace of North Vietnamese infiltration has been roughly able to sustain the gross manpower needs of the Viet Cong main forces.

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35. *What evidence do we have, if any, that any kind of cross-over point has been reached when the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese are losing more men than they are infiltrating and recruiting?*

36. *If we have not reached that point, when do we predict that it will be reached?*

During the past year the enemy's manpower problems within South Vietnam have become more serious as his loss rates have increased and his ability to recruit in South Vietnam has diminished. Analysis of VC/NVA loss and recruitment suggests that the enemy's military order of battle (North Vietnamese Army, VC Main and Local Forces, VC Guerrillas, and Administrative Service units)--which increased substantially during 1965 and 1966--has probably tapered off or perhaps been reduced somewhat during 1967. In addition, we estimate that the number of VC in the fighting forces has decreased during 1967 and the number of NVA troops has increased.

It is difficult to assess with any real confidence the extent to which over-all Communist force strength in South Vietnam has declined over the past year and any estimate of these losses is subject to wide margins of error. We are fairly certain of our estimates on the regulars, but very uncertain on the guerrillas and militia. We do not, for example, know how many of the enemy's casualties are suffered by guerrillas and militia. It may be substantial, and this could greatly affect any crossover point, even assuming our gross calculations on enemy losses are correct. Thus, for these and other reasons, we are unable to conclude that some kind of "crossover point" has been reached and we are unable to predict when it might be reached in the future.

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37. *What are the statistics on the roads open today versus those open a year ago? What definition do you use of an "open road?"*

The percentage of open roads in South Vietnam has increased from 36 percent in June 1966 to almost 50 percent in September 1967. "Open road" means relatively secure -- one along which unarmed convoys could pass with some assurance. No road is considered safe after 6 P.M.

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38. *What are the figures on the number of enemy being killed in 1967 versus 1966?*

Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army troops lost 55,524 killed during 1966, according to MACV statistics. Enemy losses in the first 11 months of 1967 total nearly 80,000, indicating that the Communists have been losing men at a much higher rate this year than last. The weekly average of enemy killed in 1966 was 1,065. This year the average is nearly 1,700.

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39. *What are the figures on the number of defectors coming from the Communist side to the government in 1967 versus 1966?*

The number of Communist defections during the first three quarters of 1967 exceeded the number of defections for all of 1966. During the first three quarters of 1967, Communist defections numbered about 23,600 compared to 20,200 for 1966. Thus, in terms of absolute numbers, Communist defections have increased in 1967. The rate of Communist defections has, however, been declining since the first quarter of 1967 -- averaging 10,600, 7,500, and 5,500 for the first, second, and third quarters of 1967 respectively. The sharp drop in the Chieu Hoi rate over recent months appears primarily to result from a general decline in security in areas which have previously had high returnee rates and to the unsettled political conditions during and following the GVN elections. Other factors, such as increased hostile acts against the returnees, a decline in the number of significant allied search and clear operations, and problems encountered by the Hoi Chanh (ralliers) in finding employment have, no doubt, contributed to the declining rate.

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40. *What are the figures on the weapons being captured in 1967 versus 1966?*

In 1966 Communist forces in South Vietnam lost 18,600 weapons. In the period January through October 1967, enemy weapons losses were 26,200, about 40 percent higher than in all of 1966.

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41. *Please assess the success of the anticorruption campaign of the South Vietnamese in facts, figures, arrests and so forth. What has been done?*

Corruption is reported to be extensive at all levels of the administration. We have no firm information on the number of arrests to date in the Saigon government's anticorruption campaign, but government officials in October indicated that more than 100 officials in III and IV Corps had been removed for corruption this year. The most recent action has been taken against several officials in Binh Dinh Province, including the former province chief who is under a death sentence. There have been other reports that up to 50 military officers, including four lesser generals were marked for removal, but we do not know how many have yet been replaced.

Allegations of corruption have also been levied against three or four generals now holding high government posts, but there is little indication whether any action will be taken against most of these men. The government has recently set up a commission for the suppression of corruption, and a special corruption court has been in existence for two years, although active only sporadically.

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42. *Is there a ceiling -- an upper range -- above which the Viet Cong and North Vietnam cannot generate additional forces and cannot adequately supply their forces in South Vietnam? What is it?*

See question 2 for a discussion of the problem. There clearly must be such a ceiling, but we cannot say with any confidence what it is.

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43. *What is the state of the North Vietnamese economy? Crop yields? Industrial output? Exports? Imports?*

North Vietnam's normal economic activities have been greatly disrupted as a result of the bombing. The country, however, is largely agrarian, and the thousands of small shops and handicraft establishments can supply the great bulk of the simple needs of the people as long as economic and military aid continue.

Rice output in 1966 amounted to about 4.2 million tons, or 300,000 tons below the average output of recent years. Rice output in 1967 probably will be somewhat below the output in 1966.

Industrial output before the bombing was evenly divided between products of modern industrial plants and those of the handicrafts sector. Handicraft output, which includes clothing, consumer goods and canned products for export, has probably continued with only slight reductions as a result of disturbances of work routines and transport problems. The output of the modern industrial sector has been sharply curtailed by the bombing.

Exports have declined from about \$100 million in 1964 to about \$82 million in 1966. Exports in 1967 probably will be below \$70 million. Bulk exports by sea of cement, coal, pig iron and apatite have declined markedly since mid-1967. Exports of canned foods and of handicraft products continue and rail shipments of coal to China probably have continued.

Imports have increased sharply from about \$130 million in 1964 to \$240 million in 1966. Imports in 1967 will probably exceed the 1966 level. Imports of food, metal products, and transport equipment have increased measurably in 1967 above 1966.

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44. *Under present conditions, what does the future hold for the North Vietnamese economy?*

North Vietnam is heavily dependent on assistance from foreign countries merely to maintain present levels of subsistence, to maintain air defenses, and to continue the support to the war in the South. Little effort has been made to repair the presently damaged production facilities. Maintenance of yields in agriculture will depend on the continued receipt of fertilizer from foreign suppliers and on the maintenance of at least the present levels of productivity by the peasants. Economic development, although not abandoned, has been set aside in favor of supplying essential consumer and military goods. Assuming a continuation of present bombing levels, there will be a further gradual deterioration in the domestic economy and even more dependence on foreign assistance. As long as foreign aid continues and an average agricultural output is maintained there will, however, be no general economic collapse.

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45. *What has been the trend of North Vietnam imports? Up, down, or constant? By sea? By rail?*

Since the beginning of 1965 North Vietnamese imports have increased sharply. Imports in 1965, valued at \$195 million, were almost 50 percent above 1964; 1966 brought a further increase of almost 25 percent to a value of \$240 million, and imports in 1967 will probably exceed the 1966 level. Imports by sea have risen from about 700,000 tons in 1965 to over 900,000 tons in 1966. For the first ten months of 1967 seaborne imports have amounted to more than one million tons. Imports by rail increased from an estimated 320,000 tons in 1965 to an estimated 460,000 tons in 1966. During the first half of 1967 rail imports amounted to an estimated 210,000 tons.

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46. *What are the principal items of imports today and how have they changed over the past year?*

In addition to military supplies, the principal items of import today are bulk foods, petroleum products, fertilizer, and miscellaneous goods including machinery, metal products, textiles and vehicles. About one third of seaborne imports during 1967 were bulk foods--mostly flour from the USSR and rice and maize from Communist China. The 377,000 tons of bulk foods imported during the first ten months of 1967 was more than four times the volume of bulk foods imported in all of 1966. Imports of petroleum products during the first ten months of 1967 amounted to almost 200,000 tons or about equal to the amount imported during all of 1966. Miscellaneous and general cargo imports during the first ten months of 1967 amounted to about 390,000 tons, slightly less than for all of 1966. Fertilizer imports in 1967 will be substantially below imports in 1966. Industrial raw material imports, including coke, coking coal, and gypsum have declined as a result of reduced industrial capacity.

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47. *How serious is the insurgency in Thailand?*

The insurgency in Thailand now requires a substantial drain of resources and if left unchecked would represent a serious threat to the Bangkok government. Currently, armed insurgents number only about 2,000-3,000 men loosely organized in small bands, capable of only small-scale actions. Important terrorist concentration has been limited to the Northeast region and to those provinces bordering the Malay peninsula. Although insurgent strength has grown somewhat and insurgent activities have spread to other regions in the face of Thai counterinsurgency efforts, improvements in these efforts have kept the over-all level of activity in 1967 from rising above the level established in the second half of 1966.

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48. *How feasible is it for Red China to launch and maintain some kind of military intervention in the war?*

The Chinese could move 300,000 to 380,000 men against initial objectives in Thailand, Laos, and South Vietnam, using light infantry forces in the relatively dry months of November to January. Against the DMZ in South Vietnam, the Chinese could move 2 to 3 light divisions in November - January, and with improving weather during February and March, 7-8 light divisions (133,000 to 157,000 men). These figures represent basic logistical capabilities, do not take account of Peking's military strategy or the US response to such moves, and probably could not be sustained in bad weather.

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49. *If we could cut the northeast rail line and close the port of Haiphong, what effect would this have on the NVN economy? Would NVN be able to continue the war?*

Even if all seaborne imports were halted and all rail connections to China were cut it would not halt the relatively small flow of military supplies and essential economic goods needed by Hanoi to continue the war. Essential supplies would still come overland by truck, watercraft and primitive transportation.

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50. *What is the likelihood of Red China or the Soviet Union supplying NVN with new weapons -- weapons that have not been used in this war so far? What types of weapons would these be?*

It is highly likely that the North Vietnamese have sought more sophisticated weapons from the USSR and perhaps China as well. New arms agreements have been signed in recent months. We cannot be very confident of just which weapons will appear in North Vietnam or South Vietnam. Among the more likely from the USSR are coastal defense missiles, improved SAMs, heavier and more sophisticated AAA, and perhaps advanced fighters for North Vietnam. Less probable, but not to be excluded, would be the Frog, (Free Rocket over Ground). We do not estimate, however, that the USSR would supply longer range strategic missiles.

We rate the chances at least even that the Soviets -- given the current intensity of conflict -- will supply Hanoi during coming months with new or qualitatively improved weapons that have so far not been introduced. Listed in order of likelihood, these might include improved antiaircraft artillery (e.g., the ZU-23), heavier artillery and mortars, better antitank weapons; coastal defense missiles, and short range ground-support cruise missiles with conventional warheads (the Samlet and the Salish, respectively); and an improved surface-to-air missile system with a somewhat better capability against low altitude attack. Under certain contingencies, the Soviets might also supply Hanoi with a limited range ground support rocket, the Frog.

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51. *Is there any indication that any VC or NVN units are beginning deliberately not to carry out orders or beginning to rebel? Have there been any mass surrenders?*

We have seen scattered evidence in documents during the past six months of individual cadres and troops, and in some instances of a larger part of a unit disobeying battlefield discipline, but there is no evidence that this is occurring on any wide scale. Documents frequently refer to recalcitrant or undisciplined individual soldiers or cadres, suggesting that this problem is more widespread than desirable, but there is little indication that it is beyond controllable proportions. There have been no mass defections or battlefield surrenders of Communist main-force or local force units. Moreover, documentary evidence of poor battlefield discipline is not a new phenomenon: occasional enemy documents have voiced concern over this problem for many years.

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52. *Is it possible that the enemy will stop fighting, go underground, and wait until the Americans leave before starting up again?*

The enemy has this option, but would probably have to withdraw much of his North Vietnamese force through exfiltration. Such a course risks losing much of his present momentum and assets. The enemy would most likely opt for this course in an effort to preserve his remaining assets if convinced he was being severely beaten. He would consider that he faced a severe problem of reviving his effort in the future, but might well consider this preferable to complete capitulation.

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53. *Numerically, how effective were the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese in keeping South Vietnamese away from the polls in the recent election?*

In the elections for the presidency and upper house on 3 September, 4,868,266 persons--or 83.1 percent of the country's 5,853,251 registered voters went to the polls. In the lower house election on 22 October, 4,271,794 persons--or 72.9 percent of the registered voters--turned out. There is no available evidence as to how many of the registered voters not exercising their ballot were kept away by Viet Cong threats or terror, and how many were merely apathetic. The drop-off in turnout from 3 September to 22 October, however, suggests that apathy played a significant role since Viet Cong propaganda and terrorist efforts against the later elections were on a significantly smaller scale. There is probably no question that Viet Cong intimidation prevented some registered voters in outlying areas from attempting to vote in either contest; additionally, perhaps one third of the country's voting age population did not register because they live in insecure areas or in Viet Cong - held areas.

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54. *Are the VC still collecting significant taxes from the people in contested areas of SVN?*

Although available evidence suggests that the VC are having considerable difficulty meeting their tax collection goals in 1967, they still are believed to collect a large, but unknown, amount of taxes from contested areas. Increasing VC requirements, disruptions of normal food distribution channels, and the declining value of the SVN piaster have caused the VC to increase tax rates in all areas where they possess a collection capability. In areas where the populace is resistant, such as contested areas, the VC often resort to intimidation and terror to extract taxes in both cash and kind. A significant proportion of total VC tax revenues is still collected from areas not under VC control despite improved GVN security.

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55. *Compare the ability and effectiveness of the RVNAF today with that of 1966, 1965, 1964, 1963?*

The most encouraging development in the RVNAF as a whole thus far in 1967 has been the striking decline in its over-all desertion rates. The number of RVNAF desertions during the first eight months of 1967 (54,000) was nearly half the number for the same period last year. Assuming that this rate prevails for the remainder of 1967, the annual desertion total (81,500) will be considerably below the record-high levels of 116,000 and 113,000 recorded in 1966 and 1965, respectively.

Although the decline in desertions is to some extent the result of more vigorous enforcement of legislation against desertion, it may also reflect an improvement in the morale and confidence of the South Vietnamese military establishment.

The number of RVNAF "missing-in-action" (MIA) has also steadily declined from 15,000 during 1964 and 1965 to 3,300 in 1966 and 1,400 for the first eight months of 1967. Many of the MIA were deliberate deserters under combat who joined enemy ranks.

The trend of weapons lost has also been significantly reversed.

Because of the RVNAF's present heavy commitment to pacification, the total number of government operations has declined in 1967. The percentage of enemy contacts to total operations, however, has increased significantly. In the first quarter of 1966, there were 360 contacts in 820 large-unit operations, but in the first quarter of 1967, there were 380 contacts in 760 operations.

Despite these signs of progress, major problems continue to plague the RVNAF at all levels. The most persistent and serious of these include poor leadership, lack of motivation, and inadequate training.

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56. Evaluate the combat capability of the regular NVA forces.

In terms of weapons and equipment NVA units are the strongest enemy elements allied forces confront in South Vietnam. NVA units are equipped with the most modern weapons--the new family of Soviet-designed or Chinese copied 7.62-mm. weapons including the AK-47 assault rifle, SKS carbine, and RPD light machine gun.

North Vietnamese soldiers are also politically well indoctrinated and serve under highly dedicated and motivated professional cadre possessing excellent leadership traits. Training, once a source of strength in NVA units, is no longer of the caliber given prior to the NVA buildup in 1965. Exhaustion, hunger, disease, the lack of medical provisions, as well as harassment by allied units through bombing attacks and ground operations have all contributed to a drop in NVA morale. There has been, however, no noticeable lowering of combat effectiveness judging from the courage and endurance demonstrated by NVA troops in combat, as well as their comparatively low desertion and defection rates.

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57. *What is the reasoning behind the enemy's recent series of very strong offensive actions, Con Thien, Dak To, and so forth?*

The primary reason for enemy offensives in the area of Con Thien, Dak To, Loc Ninh - Song Be, and so forth, apparently is to force the allies to disperse their units over wide areas in battle terrain favorable to the Communists. The enemy hopes this will soak up uncommitted allied maneuver battalions and prevent the concentration of allied forces in any area where they might knock out and conclusively destroy a significant portion of the Communist forces.

The Communists also hope by these actions to demonstrate their continuing offensive capabilities, regain additional combat initiative, inflict heavy casualties on the allies, and show that the GVN cannot provide adequate security. If the Communists can retain and strengthen their positions in these areas, they may try to move out from them once again toward more populated regions. The strategy is an important element of the Communist belief that they can hold on and deny the allies any conclusive victory in South Vietnam beyond the point where continuation of the war is politically feasible in the United States.

It does not appear that the vigor of the winter-spring offensive of the Communists this year represents any last gasp, big push before negotiating.

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58. *How much of the North Vietnamese manpower base is committed to all areas of their war effort?*

About one million North Vietnamese, or about 10 percent of the labor force, are directly involved in the war effort. Slightly less than 500,000 North Vietnamese are in the armed forces. In addition, airstrikes have required the services of about 500,000 civilian men and women of all ages for the repair of lines of communication, reconstruction of buildings and bridges, and civil defense. Of these civilian workers, about 300,000 work part-time.

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59. *Does the declining military situation of the VC/North Vietnamese increase the danger of intervention by the Red Chinese? Can China or Russia allow defeat of their Communist allies in South Vietnam?*

China has a substantial stake in the outcome of the war in South Vietnam and will exert considerable pressure to sustain Hanoi's will and ability to prolong the war. We do not, however, believe Peking is committed to a Communist success in South Vietnam at any price. If faced with a situation where only their own intervention could save the situation, we believe the Chinese fear of a US attack on the mainland would be the commanding factor.

If the Communist position in South Vietnam continues to deteriorate and the Communist forces there face certain defeat, the Soviets would almost certainly accept a political resolution of the conflict in the South and would urge Hanoi to do the same. At the same time, the Soviets would probably make it clear to Hanoi that the USSR would not involve itself in an effort to retrieve a lost cause even if this should mean denying Soviet assistance to, or cooperation with, the Chinese should they choose to intervene in the South on behalf of Hanoi.

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60. *How effective has our intelligence been in anticipating enemy activities?*

In the past two and a half years our intelligence has become increasingly effective in anticipating enemy activities. During 1966 and 1967, a large number of allied search-and-destroy operations were mounted against concentrations of enemy forces on the basis of intelligence reporting. It is clear that in many instances these operations thwarted offensive plans of the enemy, disrupted his base areas and logistics, and seriously eroded his infrastructure, hence his control of the populace. The airborne direction finding program to pinpoint major enemy units and headquarters has been invaluable in spotting enemy concentrations. The results of this program have figured heavily in the effective use of air strikes and artillery. Captured documents and prisoners and returnees have provided a constant flow of timely information on the enemy's forces at all levels. This intelligence has enabled us to measure with considerably more confidence the threat posed by enemy forces as well as the enemy's problem areas and weaknesses. We are now able to get a much earlier indication of impending large-scale infiltration through communications intelligence breakthroughs and experience with earlier infiltration.

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61. *Do we have information about new Russian or Chinese weapons to be introduced soon into the VC/NVA military structure?*

See question 8; as to current information, there is nothing specific on new Communist weaponry to be introduced.

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62. *Will the enemy's great reserve strength make our war of attrition an extremely long process, if indeed practical?*

The enemy's great reserve strength lies partly in his own manpower reserves and partly in the support coming from other Communist countries. There seems to be no measurable limit to the latter. North Vietnam's manpower reserves are large enough to make a war of attrition an extremely long one. Each year about 190,000 North Vietnamese males attain the age of 17. Of these about 115,000 would probably be fit for military service. In addition, at present only about one fourth of the physically fit males of military age are in the armed forces.

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63. *What is the definitive structure (order of battle) of the North Vietnamese forces in the South?*

North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam are organized into seven divisions (six confirmed and one possible). These seven divisions have 18 of the 26 NVA regiments in South Vietnam (25 confirmed and one possible) subordinate to them. The other eight regiments usually operate independently, although under the control of a military region or "front" command. There are two major NVA "fronts"--the DMZ and B-3 Fronts. Except for the three regiments of the 7th NVA Division and one independent artillery regiment, all North Vietnamese forces are located in I and II Corps. At least two of the divisions--the 324 and 325--are active in the DMZ area and move into and out of South Vietnam. At present, for example, two regiments of the 324th are in the South while two regiments of the 325th are back in North Vietnam. North Vietnamese strength in the above units, as well as a number of independent battalions, now is believed to be about 54,000 men. In addition, there are a sizable number of North Vietnamese troops in Viet Cong main and local force units.

There are reports of North Vietnamese units not yet carried in the order of battle. These include one or two new artillery regiments and several new infantry regiments. It is quite probable that at least some of these reported units will be accepted into the order of battle in the coming months.

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64. *What is the infiltration rate today? Six months ago, a year, two years ago?*

The notion that there is or has been any real "rate of infiltration" probably is misleading. Prior to about mid-1966, the North Vietnamese were sending to South Vietnam those forces in organized units that they believed were required. Through mid-1965, these forces were intended to aid the Communists in achieving a relatively quick victory over an ineffective ARVN. After mid-1965, they seemed to be bent on matching the US and Free World buildup--not man for man, of course, but in terms of maneuver battalion strength. If there is such a thing as a rate of infiltration--that is, a required number of men who must be sent south each month--then it is likely that such a rate was first established in middle to late 1966. This rate would have been the number of men required each month to keep main and local force units--in conjunction with recruiting in South Vietnam--at or near their most effective strengths. We estimate that such a rate was probably about 3,500 men a month toward the end of 1966, and that it has gone up slightly to about 4,500 men a month in 1967. The 1967 figure probably is higher, but additional information is required before we can be certain. If Communist casualties continue to rise, and if recruiting difficulties in South Vietnam continue to grow, then the rate of infiltration will rise accordingly.

The average monthly infiltration could be called a rate of infiltration. This would be as follows:
1965-- average monthly infiltration of 3,060 men
1966-- average monthly infiltration of 7,250 men
1967-- average monthly infiltration for first 10 months of 4,700 men

Almost any average can be calculated by juggling the months accepted infiltration or both accepted and possible infiltration. MACV does this in its monthly infiltration report. For example, the average infiltration from 1 October 1965 through 31 May 1967 was 4,350 men a month in the accepted categories and 6,600 men a month in the accepted and possible categories.

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65. *What is the Buddhist opposition's effect today?*

The influence of the militant Buddhists has been greatly weakened by the suppression of their 1966 "struggle movement." Many of their followers are reluctant to agitate openly today because of government surveillance and its ability to take countermeasures. The militants probably retain considerable sympathy among the mass of Buddhists, and they remain a major potential nuisance for rallying the discontented. They are represented in the lower house where they may prove a vocal, but minor, opposition element. They provide a sounding board for such sentiments as war weariness, concern over US influence, fear of inflation, and antimilitarism, but they are not likely to cause serious disruption unless handed a popular issue to attract now passive elements of the populace.

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66. *Is there evidence of help of NVN by Communist countries, besides China and Russia, other than trade? What does NVN receive from these countries in trade? Are there arms and advisers from these countries in NVN?*

Direct military assistance to North Vietnam by Communist countries other than the USSR and China has been negligible. The East European Communist countries, however, provide a wide range of economic aid goods which totaled about \$95 million from the beginning of 1965 to mid-1967. The main items imported by North Vietnam from East European countries have included petroleum products, general purpose vehicles, construction supplies and equipment, heavy industrial machinery, barges, and pontoon sections.

There is no evidence of significant numbers of military advisers or a significant quantity of arms in North Vietnam from countries other than the USSR and Communist China. A small contingent of North Korean flight personnel are flying defensive combat patrols for the North Vietnamese air force.

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67. If we could cut the northeast rail line and close the port of Haiphong, how rapidly would this degrade the air defenses in North Vietnam?

This program would not degrade the air defenses in North Vietnam. Air defense materiel arrives by rail and even if all rail connections with China were cut there would still be sufficient transport capacity available easily to move the required volumes of AAA ammunition, SAM replacement materiel and missiles, and replacement antiaircraft artillery.

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